The Saturday Gazette.

BLOOMFIELD AND MONTCLAIR.

WILLIAM P. LYON, Editor and Proprietor.
CHARLES M. DAVIS, Associate Editor.

OFFICE, Bloomfield, N. J.

AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY JOURNAL OF LITERATURE, EDUCATION, GENERAL NEWS AND LOCAL INTERESTS. $2.00 A YEAR—IN ADVANCE

VOL. III.—NO. 32. Saturday, August 8 1874 Single Copies, 5 Cents

THE
SATURDAY GAZETTE,
BLOOMFIELD AND MONTCLAIR.
BELLEVILLE, CALDWELL AND VERONA.
AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY JOURNAL OF LITERATURE, EDUCATION, POLITICS, GENERAL NEWS, AND ESPECIALLY OF LOCAL INTERESTS.

All PUBLIC and LOCAL questions, including political and social, sanitary and reformatory, educational and industrial topics, will be clearly presented and fully and fairly discussed.

It is intended and expected to make it not only acceptable and interesting to the general reader, but of special value to citizens of Essex county and of real importance to every resident of Bloomfield, Montclair Caldwell. Belleville and Verona.

Nothing will be admitted to its columns that is unworthy of cordial welcome to every family circle.

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To ADVERTISERS it should prove a valuable medium. Our circulation extends to every part of Essex county, and considerably elsewhere.

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jy26ly

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july26

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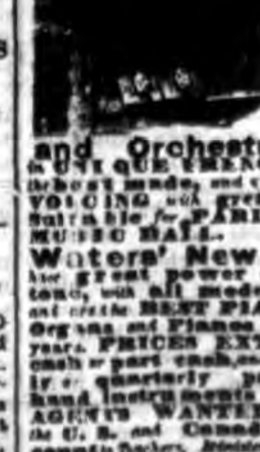

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aug15

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From Chambers Journal

Across the Sands.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAPTER II.

"I am glad Miss Gray, that you have caught me," said the good-natured surgeon: "I can spare a few moments to visit your sister, and make up for it by sharp driving afterwards. I am called into the country, nine miles off, on rather a serious case; old Archdeacon Allports is down again with his old enemy, the gout, and they fear it is determined to the head this time."

So saying, he hurried to the cottage, and by a rough but kindly assertion of his despotic authority in such instances, cleared the house of all the well-meaning but useless volunteers who encumbered it, only leaving Nancy and an especially of hers, the widow of a fisherman, and whom he knew to be more hopeful and less garrulous than most of her class.

"There is no immediate danger," said the doctor, after his inspection had come to a close, and Margaret could have blessed him for the welcome words "but these seizures, even when least severe, are among the very gravest disorders which we medical men have to deal with, and the rather that they only occur when the constitution is peculiar and the general health weak. You are too brave and too sensible, Miss Gray, to render it necessary that I should disguise the truth from you. I will write a prescription—I cannot furnish the ingredients for, unluckily, I have them not in my surgery—which can be properly made up at Cooper's, the principal Stourchester chemist, whose address in High Street you know. Your sister ought to take it as soon as possible—the earlier the better; and on its being promptly supplied, say in the course of a couple of hours, depends—mark me, not her recovery—she will probably recover—but the quick and certain return of her powers of speech and of movement. A great shock might bring her around, without help from the pharmacopœia, but this is best and safest. It is a potent preparation, compounded of drugs, poisonous for the most part, and such as no respectable chemist would give you without medical warrant; but see! I have written my name and address in full, and they know my handwriting at Cooper's well enough. Now, I must go, or the archdeacon,——, and an instant afterward the roll of wheels told that the doctor was speeding on the road.

Margaret only bent forward to kiss Aline's cold cheek, then caught up the precious sheet of paper, marked with cabalastic characters, at the foot of which was appended the signature of George Haynes Smith, Holly Lodge, Wood End, and turned to the door.

"Take care of her, Nanny, while I am gone," she said earnestly; "and remember the doctor's desire, that air should be admitted in plenty, as at present, and that no one should come in but yourself and good Mrs. Brooks there. I shall be back again with the medicine as soon as I can."

"But you are not going, Miss Margaret, out across the sands again?" cried Nanny, aghast. "Why, any one can see there's a storm coming on that would be hard for a man to face, let alone a lady like you. Better wait till I can run up to Farmer Burnett's on the hill, and beg him to loan you a gig, or, anyhow a spring cart and horse, and a lad to drive it, and so go round by Battle Bridge; though, as ill-luck will have it, it happens to be Fettlesham market day, and the master and mistress'——"

But already Margaret had got beyond reach of the old woman's voice, and was speeding rapidly onward, crossing the Stour by the stepping-stones, and taking her solitary way across the darkling sands.

Swift of foot and strong of will—nerved, too, by the thought of Aline's peril—Maragaret flew rather than walked on her way to Stourchester. The hollow roar of the sea, nearer than before, which told that the tide had turned, the scream of the sea-birds; the boding shriek of the wind, that freshened fast; the sable blackness of the clouds that hung like a gigantic pall above the measureless waters—all seemed indifferent to her, Aline was ill—dying, perhaps—and her life might hang upon a question of minutes. Just as Margaret left the sand to ascend by the hollow road, between high banks that led up into Stourchester, the storm broke, and the heavy rain—she had left her cloak where she she had dropped it, beside the couch of her sick sister—chilled and wetted her, but she scarcely felt it as she pushed steadily on. How impatiently did she wait while careful little bald-headed Mr. Cooper, who had served half the county with drugs for the better part of a century, settled his gold,rimmed spectacles to read the prescription and to verify the autograph. And when the chief assistant was demurely busy in the preparation, adding one ingredient to another, plying the pestle, filtering, compounding, what agony it was for Margaret to linger there—for hours, as it seemed, listening to the slow ticking of the methodical clock below the bust of Jenner, and with all her thoughts, her very heart, far away across the Stour, at the side of Aline's bed of pain.

"You'll go round by the road, Miss of course," said the old chemist, as he put the little packet in her hands—"no one would think of risking the short cut by the river, now."

Margaret muttered something inarticulate and hurried out. The black clouds were flying fast overhead. It was almost dark. A dull roar as of wind and sea in unison, was audible even in the streets of Stourchester. Few people were to be seen in the streets, the very stones of which shone as the sheets of rain beat on wall and pavement. What was that? The first red flash of lightning, followed, after a pause, by a hollow roll of long and distant thunder, Margaret stopped, and for an instant hesitated. Close by, across the street, was the well-known yard of the principal livery stable keeper of the place. If she could get a carriage there, no time need be lost, and she need not face the passage by the sands.

"Can I have a fly, at once—or a carriage of any sort?" she asked hastily,

"Very sorry, Miss," said the man, who knew her; "but we have nothing in. All our carriages have been bespoke—some for the Odd Fellows' fete; some for the picnic at Sir John's over at Cloverley. If you could wait for half an hour, or may be, three-quarters—"

Impossible! She could not wait, and so without further attempts to proceed by the safe but circuitous route of Battle Bridge, she hurried through the street, struck into the hollow way that led to the sands, and pushed on resolutely, through the blinding rain and gathering gale.

Meanwhile it was an anxious time for the watchers beside Alice's couch of sickness, as they listened to the shriek of the wind as it whistled among the boughs of the swaying poplars without, and to the sullen moan of the rising sea. Presently the rain began to beat thick and heavy against the walls and windows of the cottage, and then the ominous growl of the far-off thunder added its menace to the already threatening voice of the impending storm.

"Won't she stop in Stourchester, or go round by the bridge, anyhow?" asked the fisherman's widow, shading her eyes with her wrinkled hand, as a brighter flash lit up the gloom of the fast deepning twilight.

"Not she!" returned Nanny deciseively. "She never seems to know what fear is, and where Miss Aline's concerned, I believe she would go through fire itself. The tide must be on the turn by now."

"The wind blows harder and harder. The sea will run in to-night like a mill-race," said the other woman. "Lord have mercy on Miss Margaret if she is out on the sands then."

There was a long and painful silence. It was broken by the fisherman's widow, who had drawn near by the window, through which the rain was driving terribly.

"It was just such a night as this—you mind it, Nanny; we were young ourselves then, both of us—when Sam King and Will Atkinson, and two other young chaps that had been over to Stourchester Fair, tried to cross. They were fisher-lads, and knew the coast; and they'd never had done it but for the drink that made them foolhardy, and the jeering and flouting, and daring them to show their mettle, of some of the public-house company. I remember that two of them were found in the stake-nets next day entangled among the meshes just about low-water mark—but poor Sam and Will were never seen dead or alive—it was thought the bodies were washed out too far to sea ever to touch beach again. Hearken! how the waves are getting up beyond the Point. 'Twas a sin Nanny, not to stop that poor girl from going to her death; we ought to have held her back by force, if need was."

"How could I?" said Nanny disconsolately. "She's that quick, she was gone like the blink of an eye; and besides, Jenny, she is not one to be easily hindered when she's set upon a thing. I shouldn't care to thwart her where this poor young thing"—pointing to Aline's passive figure—"was in question. But who's this at the door?"

It was a man's step, firm and rapid that crushed the gravel of the narrow garden path, and a man's hand, that pulled the door-bell with unaccustomed force.

"Is Miss Margaret—is Miss Gray, I mean at home?" asked the new comer, in a clear, strong voice, that had something very pleasant in the ring of it. "If so please to say—"

But Nanny put her apron to her eyes and began to sob aloud.

"Why, what is all this!" asked the applicant for admission, with a sudden tremor in the rich voice that had sounded so bold and joyous an instant before. "Nothing wrong? No one ill here, or— Speak! can't you, and let me know the truth."

"It is Miss Aline, the younger of the two, that's ill," answered Nanny, half frightened at the vehemence of the questioner, who now drew a deep breath, as if relieved of a cruel apprehension.

"Yes. poor thing, she was always delicate," he said. "It is nothing serious, I hope. I am sorry I made so much noise in arriving. Perhaps you would tell Miss Margaret, who is with her sister, of course, that a friend from abroad—or, better, say that Mr. Darrell—Frank Darrell—"

But his speech was interrupted by a fresh outburst of sobs, in which. from sympathy, Nanny's friend and fellow-watcher, whose sun-browned face now appeared in the passage as she came forth, candle in hand, joined her. Servants often know a great deal more of the antecedents and the inner life of their employers than the latter would deem possible, and Nanny, who was both warm-hearted and inquisitive, was familiar enough with the name of the young sailor, who was supposed to have been lost at sea. She wrung her withered hands in genuine distress.

"God be good to her, poor, dear young lady," broke out the old woman passionately. "It does seem hard, just when she would have been so happy!—you are Miss Margaret's sweetheart, Sir, are you not?"

"Yes, and I have come back to claim her as my wife," answered the visitor hastily. "But tell me my good woman, what is wrong with *her*, I mean. Your hints torture me."

It was old Jenny Brooks, the fisherman's widow, whose husky voice replied: "She has gone across the sands, gone to Stourchester, Sir, to fetch some doctor's stuff that Doctor Smith ordered for her young sister, lying speechless in a swoon in the parlor here; and the tide is coming in, and ——"

The visitor staggered as if he had received a blow, and leaned against the door-post for support. Twice he tried to speak, but his voice failed him, and he stood staring stupidly at the two women, as if he hardly knew the meaning of the evil tidings that greeted him. A handsome, manly young fellow he was, with brown hair that curled around a broad forehead, somewhat bronzed by the hot sun of the tropics, and a mouth and eyes that expressed at once gay good humor and a determination not readily to be shaken. He was pale enough now, however, to warrant the compassionate looks of Nanny and her friend, as the former whispered: "You should have broken the news to him a bit. He takes it to heart, poor fellow."

But Frank Darrell, the anguish of that moment over, soon regained the presence of mind that was due to habitual intimacy with danger.

"Never mind me," said the young man hoarsely; "time is precious—so answer me straight to the point, my good soul, has the tide turned yet? And which is the road to the sands? One thing more—who in the village has a boat ready to put to sea at five minutes' notice? It is work that would be well paid."

"My husband's cousin. Jasper Veen, has his coble beached this side of the headland, ready for launching, and his sons are at home," answered widow Brooks. "But I am not sure in this dirty weather—"

"Leave that to me," said Frank impatiently; "only guide me to his house, and then show me the shortest way to reach the sands."

"The sands!" returned Nancy aghast; "why it would be throwing away another life, Mr. Darrell, to venture on them now. By this time the tide is in the Stour, and the Stepping-stones—"

"Nonsense! —I can wade, or, if need be, swim" answered young Darrell, whose spirits began to rise at the very notion of personal peril. "I suppose the town lights will be beacon enough, once I am on the shore, to guide me along the path to Stourchester, and I shall meet her between the river and the opposite bank. Come, then mercy, what is that?"

And indeed, the exclamation was natural enough, for there, in the passage, stood Aline, wan and haggard as a ghost, with her hair streaming over her shoulders, but restored, as if by a miracle, from that death-in-life that had held her in its gripe.

"I know you, Frank Darrell!" she cried out breathlessly, as the women set up a shriek, as if they had beheld the very dead to rise again among the living; "I know you will save her—my treasure—my darling—save her for me—save her, for yourself. See, I am strong and well, and I will come too, and——"

"Hush, hush, Miss Aline—you must not stir one step further on such a night," said Darrell, as he gently led back the excited girl to the sofa, on which, the first wild impulse to exertion spent, she dropped helplessly. "I must not lose time—I will bring Margaret back—bring her safe and well, or you shall never see Frank Darrell more." And leaving her in Nanny's care, he hurried, guided by widow Brooks, towards the hut, built of old ship's timbers, calked and coated with tar, in which her cousin Jasper dwelt.

"Can you get your coble afloat the instant the tide serves, to save life on the sands? It's a wild night—I know that—I am a sailor too—but a good boat and stout hearts can weather it. Ten guineas—aye, or twenty for your work—but to a true seafaring man, and a Christian, the money is a less reward than the saving of a fellow creature from drowning."

The men looked at one another. The howl of the rising wind and the roar of the surf were very audible even within doors.—The women began to talk, in complaining accents, of the threatening weather. It was more than gold was worth, one of them said, weeping, to put to sea on such a night as this.

"There are things better than gold though." said Frank promptly "and till I see it with my own eyes I'll never believe that English sailors will sit in cowardly security in the chimney corner, and let a girl drown within perhaps a cable's length of their door,—ay, or that English women would hold Englishmen back in such a cause. Come, I risk more than I ask you I shall go down alone this instant, to the sands, to save the girl I love, or die with her. Out with the boat, men, you'll never repent the good deed."

Five minutes later, and the coble, dragged by the main force of sturdy arms, came grating through the shingle of the pebbly beach, ready to be launched, so soon as the white waves, now very near, should afford depth of water sufficient for her to float in. But already Frank Darrell was on the sands and fording the channels of the Stour, where already the water was deepening, as the first influx of the tide forced back the current. There was not light enough for the young man to distinguish the stepping stones, now completely submerged, but he was active and strong, and waded his way across without much difficulty. Once on the firm sand beyond the river, he looked up at Stourchester town, the lights of which were to be his guide. The gale blew fiercer and fresher than before. and the hollow roar of the sea drew nearer and nearer.

"To save her or to die with her!" he muttered as he bent his head and hurried on—"the last, I fear is the most likely."—And he doubled his speed as he rushed on.

It was when the first half of her difficult journey across the sands had been performed, that Margaret Gray, as she paused to take breath, and snatch an instant's repose from toil, realized the peril of her task. She was strong in her youth and health-strong also in her unselfish courage, and the deep love for her suffering young sister, which had prompted her to run a risk so fearful; but now she began for the first time to fear that her decision had been unwise, and that she had rashly taken on herself more than she could accomplish. All the old histories of lives lost, by carelessness or misfortune, on those fatal sands, crowded on her memory at once, and with a force which they had never had before. She was well used to traverse the wide estuary of the Stour by daylight, and in moderately calm weather; but now, buffeted by the gale, drenched by the furious rain and driving spray, the hearkening to the increasing noise of the surf as it broke beyond the headlands, she felt her heart beating wildly, and acknowledged to herself that she had done wrong. Behind her was the lighted town of Stourchester; but to retrace her steps would now be almost as dangerous as to proceed. In front, a solitary gleam from the window of an upland farm was all she had to guide her as she pushed on, desperately, toward the Stour. Louder and louder grew the tumult of the wind and rain.

It was not long before Margaret, with dismay, recognized the presence of a new peril. The sand, commonly so firm, was now palpably quickening, to use the local term, beneath her tread. Her progress became slower and more laborious as her feet repeatedly sank below the soft and spongy surface. Often, too, when she trod on the footprints which wayfarers had left behind them that day, she found them already filled with water that oozed from below; and more than once she had to splash and struggle through shallow pools where no such pools had been when last she crossed the estuary. Her strength was nearly spent, but still she pushed bravely on, fighting every inch of her way against the driving gale. Almost mechanically, she held fast the little packet that contained the precious drug which was to restore Aline to health. Poor Aline, what would become of her, if she were doomed, that night, to undergo a second bereavement, that should leave her, forlorn indeed, at the mercy of the cruel world! The thought of her sisters absolute dependence on her nerved Margaret to fresh exertions, and, though greatly fatigued, she struggled on. But how the thunder, which had been of late less frequent, added its formidable voice to that of the raging wind, and the lurid gleam of the lightning came again and again to illumidate the waste. What was that coming on, fleecy white, advancing rapidly, and covering the yellow sands as with a spotless shroud? Not the sea, surely. Another flash! The low white foam-like is nearer now, hurrying, stealing on; and behind it, far away, is something like a snowy wall, rolling pitilessly on, pushed forward, as it seemed, by the tumultuous blackness that followed close behind. Then Margaret knew that the worst had come to pass. It was impossible now to reach the Stour. The tide was in upon her, and she was lost!

Another blinding flash, and yet another! and while still dazzled by the lightening, Margaret felt a sudden chill as something white reached her feet, passed by her, and sped on, far up the estuary, and she was actually standing in the shallow water that had now overspread the sands, and which was deepening as fresh foam lines rolled in, while the tumbling wall of surf came on as if hungry for prey. She had no hope to be heard, no chance of rescue, yet instinctively she set up one long, despairing cry for succor. No answer! save from howling wind and seething sea, that seemed to mock her idle appeal for aid. Yet once again she cried aloud, and this time the call was answered, as, splashing through the knee-deep water, a man's dark figure became visible. In the next instant he was beside her. It was Frank Darrell, who hurridly expressed his delight at finding her. There was no time to lose.

And as he spoke he lifted her in his powerful arms as easily as if she had been a child, and waded vigorously onward. For a moment Margaret, dizzy with the shock of this unexpected meeting with one whom she had secretly mourned as dead or faithless, was, as it were insensible to fear. She seemed safe, with those strong arms around, with drooping her head on the shoulder of the man whom she loved so dearly, and it was only the roar of the approaching sea that roused her from her sense of blissful security.

By this time Frank had gained, with some toil, the vantage-ground which he desired to reach. By the light of the red red flashes, his quick eye had espied broken post or stake of stout timber, green with sea-weed, that protruded from the surface of a sloping sand-mound, and around which lay several heavy stones. Here, with his back to the weather-beaten scrap of wood-work, he could rest and take breath, while eagerly scanning, at each recurrent flash, the wilderness of waters before him.

"All depends on Veen and his coble," he said aloud; and then, exerting his voice to its full strength, he hailed the as yet unseen boat. "The lubbers have had time surely, to get their cockle-shell thus far!" he muttered between his teeth; and then addressed a few words of encouragement to Margaret, as he informed her of the fishermen's promise to put off at once from the shore.

"Listen to the wind," said Margaret, shuddering; "hear the roar of the surf as it dashes against the beach yonder! It is no safe task to face this storm. Their hearts may have failed them, or their boat may have"——

She did not complete the sentence for she saw by her lover's pale face that his own opinion was much the same as her own. The rising tide ran in with the speed of a mill-sluice; the water soon reached nearly to Darrell's waist and he had to direct Margaret to cling with all her force to the post to prevent being washed away as she stood on the rough stones at the foot of the piece of timber.

"O Frank, to find you again, only to lose you, and to know that you have given your life for mine!" murmured the heart-broken girl, as hope forsook her. "Poor Aline, too, dying, perhaps, for want of"—

"No, no," interrupted the young sailor, "Aline is well, or nearly so;" and he hurriedly told of the invalid's strange recovery of the power of speech and motion, under the influence of intense anxiety for Margaret's safety; "and I trust we'll live to be happy together this many a day, Boat ahoy!—Was not that an answer?"

Alas, no; it was but the scream of a seamew hovering past. Again Darrell called aloud, and this time he was all but sure that the hail was returned. He strained his eyes to pierce the blackness of the gloom, but could see nothing but the white waves leaping up like wolves greedy for their spoil. He had been compelled again to lift Margaret in his arms, and as he did so a taller wave than any of the rest struck him on the shoulder with a force that made him stagger. It was impossible long to hold on now. Calm and resigned, Frank Darrell stooped to kiss Margaret's sweet calm face, and the brave girl's cold lips returned the farewell caress.

"Good-by, dear—dear husband—my only love;" she murmered gently; but just then there broke forth a loud, hoarse shout. "Ahoy, there, ahoy!"—and there was a gleam of a lantern that showed the coble close at hand, the spray breaking over her in showers, as a couple of hardy boatmen bent forward over the bow, ready to throw the saving rope. The rescuers had arrived only just in time, however, for their aid to be efficacious, since even Darrell's strength was fairly spent when he and Margaret

POST CARDS
Thomas M. Tryniski
309 South 4th Street
Fulton New York
13069
www.fultonhistory.com